the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-III). The Gas Production rate during testing was in the range of 5 to 8 Million Metric Standard Cubic Feet Per Day (MMSCFD) with different bean sizes. This block is adjacent to deepwater block KG-DWN-98/3, where the largest discovery of gas for the year 2002 was found by Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL). The recent discovery has been made at a different stratigraphic level. In addition, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) during the first quarter of 2005-06, has struck gas in the well GS-15-9- in the shallow waters of the Krishna-Godavari offshore basin.

While these discoveries augur well for the country, it is too early toestimate reserves in GSPC's discovery as only one object out of four has been tested so far. Estimation of gas in-place reserve can be made only after the completion of production testing, calibration of 3D seismic data with the drilled well data, and detailed expert analysis of the geo-physical and geological data acquired in the block.

Purchase agreement with Iran for LNG supply

189. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Iran has signed the Sales Purchase Agreement for LNG supplies;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the areas where this gas will be utilized;

(c) whether Iran has also exploration blocks for OVL and IOC plans to set up LNG plants and Petro Chemical Companies there; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The Sale Purchase Agreement (SPA) for the import of 5 MMTPA of LNG from Iran was signed in the presence of the Petroleum Ministers of the two countries between GAIL/IOC/BPCL and National Iranian Gas Export Company Limited (NIGEC) on 13 June 2005 in Tehran. The contract is for a period of 25 years beginning from the last quarter of 2009. The regassified LNG would be used to partially meet the burgeoning demand for gas in the country.

(c) and (d) Along with the aforesaid import of 5 MMTPA LNG by the Indian companies, under a Buy Back Contract OVL has been offered 100% rights and obligations for the development of the Jufeyroilfield and 10% rights and obligation for development of the Yadavaranoilfield.

As regards IOC's plans of investing in Iran, they, along with M/s Petropars of Iran, have submitted a joint proposal to NIOC for the award of a Block to set up LNG liquefication plant and marketing the LNG. As far as participation in Petrochemicals projects in Iran is concerned, GAIL is in discussion with the National Petrochemicals Company of Iran.

Overseas gas pipeline projects

190. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has weighed possible political risks over the proposed Indo-Iranian pact on supply of natural gas pipe overland *via* Pakistan;

(b) whether India has also taken due note of US apprehensions over the proposed Indo-Iranian gas supply pact and of the possible US sanctions over Iran threatening the implementation of the project; and

(c) the status of other overland gas pipeline projects being negotiated with Turkmenistan and Myanmar?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) In order to meet the country's energy requirements, Government is pursuing the prospects for importing natural gas from Iran by underground pipelines. The Government is discussing the details of the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project with the Governments of Iran and Pakistan. The discussion is progressing satisfactorily. For this purpose, two separate Secretary-level Joint Working Groups (JWGs) viz., the India-Iran special JWG and the India-Pakistan JWG, have been constituted to discuss the "financial, technical, commercial, legal and related issues to realize a safe and secure world-class project".

(c) Minister (P&NG) had visited Myanmar in January 2005 and participated in the trilateral Ministerial meeting between the Oil Ministers of Bangladesh, Myanmar and India. In pursuance of the decisions taken at that meeting, a Techno-Commercial Working Committee (TCWC) of the